

JOHN EDGERLEY, BOTANIST, IN NEW ZEALAND

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Abstract. John Edgerley collected plants in New Zealand for Mr. A. B. Lambert and the Earl of Mountnorris from 1835 to 1841. He was a nurseryman at Newmarket, New Zealand, from 1843 to 1849.

John Edgerley¹ was born about 1814.² He arrived at Sydney with Lieutenant Thomas McDonnell, R.N.³, on 10 May, 1835, by the sailing ship *Emma Eugenia* from the Downs.⁴ McDonnell had been appointed an additional British Resident in New Zealand⁵, and he reached his property at Horeke, Hokianga, on 30 July, 1835⁶. He employed about 12 men at Horeke⁷ and one of them, John Edgerley, had the duties of gardener and botanist⁸.

The place and date of Edgerley's arrival in New Zealand were recorded⁹ as "Bay of Islands, 1836", but the vessel in which he came from Sydney was not listed. Probably, he arrived at Hokianga with McDonnell in July, 1835, and visited the Bay of Islands in 1836.

Rev. James Buller, who saw McDonnell's establishment at Horeke in 1836, described it as the largest timber depot on the Hokianga. He recorded¹⁰ that Lieutenant McDonnell

"owned a large tract of broken country by virtue of purchase; he had built two vessels in his yard, and he lived in a good house, with gardens around it of some pretensions. Mounted on an elevation, he had several pieces of cannon, and the booming of their report would sometimes echo along the surrounding hills. Rafts of long spars, or of sawn timber, were floated down to the ships—the former to be taken to England, the latter to New South Wales . . . There was likewise some trading in flax and potatoes."

1. Sometimes spelt as Edgerly, Edgeley, Egerley, and Egerly.
2. On his death in 1849, John Edgerley's age was given as 35 years.
3. Sometimes spelt as McDonnell, M'Donnell, and Macdonnell.
4. *Sydney Herald* 11 May 1835; *The Australian* 12 May 1835.
5. Right Hon. T. Spring Rice to Governor Bourke, 8 July 1834, in *Historical Records of Australia* Series 1, 17: 472, 1923.
6. Thomas Macdonnell to Richard Jones & Co., Sydney, 17 September 1835. Original in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, Riley papers - documents 1817-1856, A 109, pp. 89-96; photocopy in the Auckland Public Library.
7. *Ibid*, postscript.
8. Thomas McDonnell to Mr. Aiton, Kew, 16 November 1841. Original in the Library, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.
9. Leys, T. W. (editor) *Early history of New Zealand*. From earliest times to 1840, by R. A. A. Sherrin. From 1840 to 1845, by J. H. Wallace. H. Brett, Auckland (Brett's Historical Series). 728 + xlv pp. 1890. p.ii, entry as "Egerley, John".
Auckland Provincial Centennial Council. *Roll of early settlers and descendants in the Auckland Province prior to the end of 1852*. Centennial Memorial Publication. Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd., Auckland. 260 pp. 1940. p. 72, entry as "Egerly, John".
10. Buller, J. *Forty years in New Zealand*. Hodder & Stoughton, London. 503 pp. 1878. p. 28.

Edward Jerningham Wakefield visited Horeke in 1839, and wrote¹¹ that

“a nice wooden house, belonging to Lieutenant Macdonnell, stood on a terrace about fifty yards back from the river. Mr. Mariner [his agent] had a comfortable cottage on the bank below, buried in the midst of flourishing gardens. The fig and prickly pear were growing well in the open air; and a vineyard, with three hundred and fifty vines of different sorts, promised great things . . .”

Rev. Richard Taylor, who visited Mr. Mariner on 22 February, 1841, noted¹² that there was “an excellent garden containing many of the New Holland flowers and shrubs.”

In November, 1835, McDonnell set out to explore the Kaipara Harbour on the West Coast of the North Island of New Zealand. Wakefield described the expedition briefly¹³, and McDonnell wrote two longer accounts of it—the first a report to the British Resident, Mr. James Busby¹⁴, and the second a letter to the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society, London. By kind permission of the Royal Geographical Society, the second report is given below:—

16 Dorset Place,
Regents Park.
15th October, 1838.

Captain Washington, R.N.,
Secretary to The Geographical Society.
Dear Sir,

You mentioned last week that some person had laid claim to the honor of *first* discovering the Entrance into the Kaipara River, and had proceeded up one of its branches for 70 miles in a Vessel named the *Fanny*. Who the party may be that has so impudently set forth such a statement, it does not become me to enquire, but I pronounce it a gross and wilful misrepresentation of the truth.

The opening of the Kaipara River had for a number of years occupied my attention. In 1830 I despatched a European with several of the Hokianga Chiefs to Kaipara for the purpose of obtaining information, and to ascertain from the Chiefs of the Kaipara district, if canoes were procurable of sufficient size to enable me to sound the Entrance. The report was unsatisfactory, and the canoes were not to be had. In 1832 I made another effort, but want of boats, boisterous weather, and other causes operated to frustrate the attempt *by sea*, however I did not abandon my intention, and my mind was bent on prosecuting it whenever circumstances possessed me with the power.

I returned to England in the latter part of 1833—and embarked for New Zealand again in January 1835. I arrived at my Establishment at Hokianga in July of the same year, via New South Wales, where I found a small Vessel of about 25 Tons nearly built up. My mind was made up to put my original project in execution. In October I despatched a European with an intelligent Chief, named Nene, and a few natives, to Kaipara, for the purpose of bringing the Chiefs of that

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11. Wakefield, E. J. *Adventure in New Zealand* . . . John Murray, London. 2 vols. 1845. Vol. 1, p. 153.
 12. Journal of Rev. Richard Taylor, 22 February 1841. Typescript copy in the Library of the Auckland Institute and Museum.
 13. Wakefield, E. J., *ibid.* p. 155.
 14. Thos. McDonnell R.N., A.B.R., to James Busby Esq., British Resident, 16 February 1836, with copies of letters dated 11 January 1836, from McDonnell to Titore and Taria. Originals in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, Dixon Library, Add 93; photocopies in the Library of the Auckland Institute and Museum.

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district to me. On their arrival at Hokianga, I made known to them my intention of proceeding by sea in the hope of being able to discover a safe channel for Ships into the Kaipara. They were much elated at this information, our arrangements were satisfactory. The Schooner was at that time completed and was launched *in their presence* and named the *Tui* (a beautiful bird of New Zealand).

Kaipara being a conquered District lying under a "Taboo" by the Napuhæ Tribes, a treaty with their Chiefs was indispensable before I ventured on my contemplated expedition. I started in November 1835 to the Bay of Islands, where I convened a meeting of the Napuhæ Chiefs, Tetore at their head. Our conference was satisfactory and my wishes were gratified to their fullest extent—a Deed was executed on the 12th of the same month granting me a large tract of Country, with the removal of the Taboo, provided my Vessel was the first to cast her anchor in the Kaipara, and to fly the British flag over its waters.

I returned to Hokianga and the *Tui* started for her destination on or about the 20th of November and entered (by the inner channel) the Kaipara River on the 23rd. About the middle of December following, the *Tui* then at anchor some 70 or 80 miles up the Wairoa (a branch of the Kaipara) the *Fanny* made her appearance; commanded by a Mr. Wing. The Rev. Wm. White (since expelled his Society) was a passenger in her. It may be mentioned that the *Fanny's* original destination was *Waicato*, but the information of the *Tui* being actually in the Wairoa river induced Mr. White the Charterer of the *Fanny* to alter her Voyage, and the latter Vessel was at Anchor in the *Hokianga River* when the *Tui* was at Anchor *up the Wairoa*.

This, my dear Sir, is the correct history of the matter, and I possess unequivocal proof in corroboration of the facts. There are besides parties now in London, one of whom landed at Falmouth about a fortnight ago, from a French Whaler, who I can produce, if further proof be required. I can very accurately trace the source from whence your information is derived. It is as false as I know it to be polluted.

I remain, Dear Sir,
Yours very truly,
THOS. McDONNELL.

P.S.

Previously to my leaving England in 1834, when I had the honor last of dining at the Raleigh Club, I then expressed my determination to explore the Kaipara, and, if practicable, to set the question at rest, as to whether there was, or was not a safe channel for shipping—even the Natives of the country were ignorant on this head.—T. McD.

The Editor of the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society acknowledged that the first vessel to enter the Kaipara was the *Tui*, and that Mr. McDonnell had obligingly communicated to the Society a plan of the harbour.¹⁵ The plan cannot be found and, probably, was returned to McDonnell. The British Museum has a printed map, pressmark 92715(1), prepared "from the documents of T. McDonnell, R.N.," showing the Kaipara Entrance and Harbour about latitude 36°S. This is reproduced as Fig. 1, by kind permission of the British Museum, London.

Presumably, Edgerley accompanied McDonnell on the expedition, as one of his plant collections, now in the Herbarium of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, bore the following label:

"This beautiful dwarf shrub I have only found upon hills of great elevation, growing in sandy peat soil, about 20 miles from the sea coast, south latitude about 36°, flowers none,

15. *Jl R. geogr. Soc. Lond.* 8: 416, 1838. See, however, Stallworthy, J. in *Early northern Wairoa* . . . Wairoa Bell and Northern Advertiser . . . Dargaville, 205 pp. 1916, p. 32, where it is stated that Captain Dacre took two vessels into the Kaipara Harbour in 1832 and "was the first man to cross the bar."

seeds in panicles, capsules 6 valved, 3 exterior and 3 interior ones, generally one seeded, rarely two, ripe seed January, native, numero 32."



FIG. 2. Edgerley's Pomaderris, *Pomaderris prunifolia* Fenzl var. *edgerleyi* (Hook.f.) L. B. Moore, growing in scrub near latitude 36°S. Taharoa Lake, 15 October, 1968.

The "beautiful dwarf shrub" is now known as *Pomaderris prunifolia* Fenzl var. *edgerleyi* (Hook.f.) L. B. Moore (Fig. 2). It is a member of the Rhamnaceae, and a relative of the kumarahou. It still occurs about latitude 36°S, in a narrow strip of land between the West Coast and the Wairoa River. Here, it grows in stunted *Leptospermum* scrub, on old consolidated sandhills, eroded on the ridges and with peat swamps in the hollows (Fig. 3). It is now rare as large areas of the scrub community have been cleared for farming (Fig. 4). The narrow strip where the plant is found lies only a mile or two inland from the sea coast, and it is possible that the 20 miles (32 km) mentioned by Edgerley was an estimate of the distance up river from Kaipara Entrance.

Unfortunately, the year of collection is not recorded on the label of the specimen at Kew, but the expedition was at the Kaipara during January.¹⁶

16. Mrs. Ruth Ross has kindly drawn my attention to the fact that McDonnell was not at the Kaipara continuously from November 1835 to January 1836. The schooner *Industry*, owned and commanded by Mr. Sibson Bragg, sailed from George Port, Launceston, Tasmania, on 13 November 1835, bound for Hokianga. On 24 November members of the crew threw Bragg overboard. McDonnell seized the vessel at Hokianga, held the murderers and witnesses, and sent them to Hobart Town for trial. During December 1835 John Edgerley helped to guard the prisoners at Hokianga.

(Thos. McDonnell, Additional British Resident, Te Horeke, to Col. Arthur, Lt. Governor, Van Diemen's Land, 14 December 1835. Original in the Tasmanian State Archives, microfilm copy in the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.)



FIG. 3. View towards the Wairoa River from the junction of the Babylon Coast Road and Baylys Basin Road, showing the stunted scrub in which Edgerley's *Pomaderris* is found. *Pinus radiata* is invading the scrub.

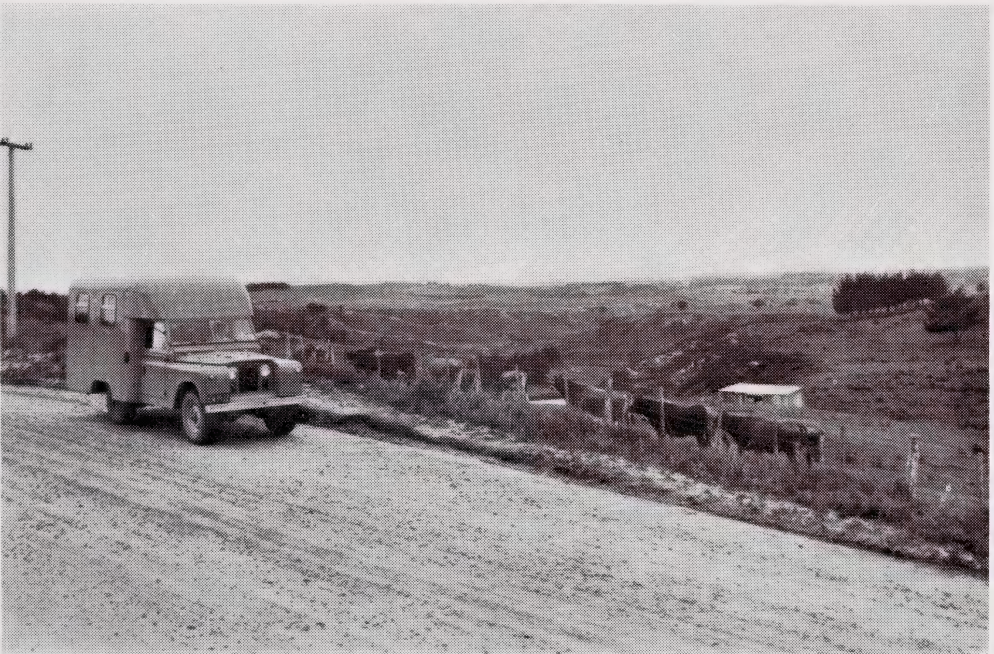


FIG. 4. Much of the country about latitude 36°S has been cleared of scrub for farming. View towards the Wairoa River from the Mt. Wesley Coast Road near Mahuta.

There is no record of Edgerley's travels in New Zealand, and the following list of localities he visited has been compiled from botanical descriptions of newly discovered plants:

Northern extremity of the Northern Island, Edgerley—*Hypolepis distans* Hook., Dennstaedtiaceae, a fern.¹⁷

Near Hokianga; Edgerley, in forests—*Thuja doniana* Hook., Cupressaceae, kawaka, a conifer.¹⁸

Bay of Islands and Wairanaka Valley, Colenso, Edgerley — *Sarcochilus adversus* Hook.f., Orchidaceae, an epiphytic orchid.¹⁹

Bay of Islands, Edgerley, Colenso, etc.—*Pterostylis trullifolia* Hook.f., Orchidaceae, a hooded orchid.²⁰

Bay of Islands and east coast, Edgerley, Colenso, etc.—*Metrosideros colensoi* Hook.f., Myrtaceae, a climbing rata.²¹

East Coast?, Edgerley—*Pittosporum reflexum* R. Cunn., Pittosporaceae, a small shrub.²²

Northern Island: mountainous parts of the interior, Edgerley, Colenso—*Panax edgerleyi* Hook.f., Araliaceae, raukawa, an aromatic tree.²³

Mr. P. S. Green kindly checked the folders for several of these species in the Herbarium of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, but found no Edgerley collection of *Hypolepis distans* or *Pterostylis trullifolia*. For *Metrosideros colensoi* there is a specimen labelled only "New Zealand, Edgerley". For *Pseudopanax edgerleyi* there is a specimen with a label in Edgerley's hand reading: "This is an intermediate growing tree the leaves of which are very fragrant—they aborigines tigh [sic] them about their persons for the purpose of enjoying the direct [?] odour—whence its name Rau Rau-a".

17. Hooker, W. J. *Species filicum* . . . Vol. 2, p. 70, 1858. (Hooker, J. D. *Handbook of the New Zealand flora* . . . 2v. Reeve & Co., London. 1864-67. Vol. 2, p. 748, 1867, recorded that Colenso had advised that Edgerley was never at Cape Maria Van Diemen, but collected this plant at Hokianga.)

18. Hooker, W. J. On a new species of *Thuja* and on *Podocarpus totara* of New Zealand. *Lond. J. Bot.* 1: 571, 1842. *Thuja doniana* Hook. is now known as *Libocedrus plumosa* (D. Don) Sargent.

19. Hooker, J. D. *Handbook of the New Zealand flora* . . . Vol. 1, p. 263, 1864. The Wairanaka Valley is probably the Whirinaki Valley, near Rawene, Hokianga County.

20. Hooker, J. D. *Flora novae-zelandiae* 2v. Lovell Reeve, London. 1853-55. (*The botany of the Antarctic voyage of H.M. discovery ships Erebus and Terror, in the years 1839-1843* . . . pt II). Vol. 1, p. 249, 1853.

21. Hooker, J. D. *Flora novae-zelandiae* . . . Vol. 1, p. 68, 1853.

22. Hooker, J. D. *Handbook of the New Zealand flora* . . . Vol. 1, p. 20, 1864. This species is found only about Whangaroa and the Bay of Islands, and "East Coast" must refer to North Auckland.

23. Hooker, J. D. *Flora novae-zelandiae* . . . Vol. 1, p. 94, 1853. *Panax edgerleyi* is now known as *Pseudopanax edgerleyi* (Hook.f.) C. Koch.

Edgerley sent live plants and dried specimens to A. B. Lambert, Esq., of London. Aylmer Bourke Lambert F.R.S. (1761-1842) was a friend of Sir Joseph Banks P.R.S. (1743-1820). He served as a Councillor of the Royal Horticultural Society, and as a foundation member (and Vice-President for 46 years) of the Linnaean Society. He formed a private herbarium of some 30,000 plants by purchase of other herbaria and collections of botanical explorers²⁴, and was the author of a magnificent work on the Coniferae superbly illustrated by Ferdinand Bauer.²⁵

Before McDonnell left England in 1834, he wrote to Lambert²⁶, expressing thanks for an introduction to Lord Stanley. McDonnell promised to send New Zealand plants to Lambert, and asked in return that he "remember the chap who sent them".

From time to time, Edgerley has been described as a collector for Kew.²⁷ In response to an enquiry, the Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, advised:—²⁸

"We have very little information about him [John Edgerley] but it seems likely that he was not sent out to New Zealand by Kew in the 1830s because this was the time when Kew's future was in the balance, and very little botanical activity took place. Unfortunately, we have no official records for this period when Kew was still the private property of the Crown."

In a recent account of Kew, Turrill remarked:—²⁹

"George III and Sir Joseph Banks both died in 1820 and Kew passed into a period of decline . . . No more collectors were sent out from Kew, though seeds and plants were occasionally received from overseas."

It is possible, however, that Lambert continued Banks' work for Kew on a minor scale. In an earlier history, Thiselton-Dyer mentioned³⁰ that, for some years, Lambert seemed to have succeeded to the role of Banks in the affairs of Kew.

The following letters from Edgerley to Lambert are reproduced by courtesy of the Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew:

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24. *The Dictionary of National Biography* . . . 22v. University Press, Oxford. Vol. 11, p. 447, 1959-60.
 25. Renkema, H. W. & J. Ardagh. Aylmer Bourke Lambert and his 'Description of the Genus *Pinus*'. *Jl Linn. Soc. Bot.* 48: 439-466, 1930.
 26. Thos. McDonnell to A. B. Lambert, 7 July 1834. Original in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, Pigott ms d9; copy kindly supplied by Mrs. H. S. Miller.
 27. *Auckland Weekly News* 15 June 1895 (obituary of Mrs. Sarah Edgerley); *New Zealand Herald* 9 January 1928 (visit of Dr. A. W. Hill); *ibid.* 30 March 1942 (obituary of Mr. W. Edgerley).
 28. The Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, to the Auckland Institute and Museum, 21 March 1967.
 29. Turrill, W. B. *The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: past and present*. Herbert Jenkins, London. 256 pp. 1959. p. 25.
 30. Thiselton-Dyer, W. T. Historical account of Kew to 1841. *Kew Bull.* 1891, p. 326.

Ti, Horeke, Hokianga,
New Zealand.
March 14th 1839.

A. B. Lambert Esq.,
Lower Grosvenor Street,
London.

Sir,

The Gentleman who will deliver this Ltr is Doctor Day³¹, the Physician of the Ship *Coromandel*, who has been kind enough to take charge of your case of specimens. He is a very intelligent man and fond of Naturalism, and as been very zealous in Botanical researches in N.Z. and no doubt he as a good collection of plants. You may probably derive some interesting information from him respecting the present state of this country.

I have the Honour to be Sir
Your obedient servant
JOHN EDGERLEY

Ti, Horeke, Hokianga
March 15th 1839

A. B. Lambert Esq.,
No 26 Grosvenor Street,
Grosvenor Square,
London.

Sir,

I avail myself of the earliest opportunity in sending you the few specimens I have and am happy to say I have procured the major part of the plants written for by you. I have discovered four species of the Genus *Metrosideros* with crimson flowers which I shall send you by this conveyance, with a large specimen of the *Cowdie* tree, also good specimens of the fruit in spirits in various stages of development with leaves and stem. You will also find two other bottles in the box with Insects and fish in them which may perhaps be interesting. You express'd a wish in your last communication not to send any more Ferns, but as I have discovered a very Handsome one I think worthy of your attention, I beg leave to introduce it to your notice. I have no intimation from you to announce the arrival of the case of living plants which I sent to you by the Ship *Earl Derham*. I am anxious to know in what state they arrived.

It is my intention not to remain in N.Z. longer than the return of Capt McDonnell unless I can turn my attention more particularly to Botanical researches.

I have the Honour to remain, Sir,
Your very Humble Servt
JNO EDGERLEY

Bagnall and Petersen³², in a fascinating biography of William Colenso, published a letter, dated 1 March, 1839, from Colenso to Cunningham³³ regarding Edgerley and Day. Part of the letter read:—

“Do you know by hearsay, a Mr. Edgerley, living on the banks of the Hokianga? I understand he is employed by some Noble or Gentleman in England to dry and forward plants. A Dr. Day (of the *Coromandel*) who pd. me a visit the other day, said, that

31. Dr. R. Day (1805-1879) rendered medical service in the Hokianga and acted as tutor to the family of Rev. J. Hobbs of Mangungu, near Horeke.
32. Bagnall, A. G. & G. C. Petersen *William Colenso* . . . Reed, Wellington. 494 pp. 1948. p. 75.
33. Allan Cunningham (1791-1839) was appointed a collector for the Royal Gardens, Kew, in 1814 on the recommendation of Sir Joseph Banks. He collected in Brazil, Australia and New Zealand. He visited New Zealand in 1826 and 1838.

Edgerley had the ferns I have and others also and that he (E.) had found *Gleichenia flabellata* $\frac{1}{2}$ -way up Maunga Taniwa (Mt. Camel) nr. Kaitaia Station.³⁴ I intend paying this gent: a visit, a la Paul Pry. Day had also a quantity for Engd. I hope you will be so alert as not to be robbed of your lawful honors by any 'herb-gatherer', no not even by the writer—I wd. not give Day anything fearing what might ensue . . ."

Cunningham replied to Colenso on 11 April, 1839.³⁵ He disclaimed knowledge of Edgerley and Day, but reported that a gardener and herb-gatherer had left England some years before with Lieut. McDonnell to dry plants for a Lord Mountnorrry³⁶, but Cunningham did not know "even the calibre of his botanic mind."

In 1839, McDonnell visited England to offer his properties to the New Zealand Land Company. The following extracts are from the McDonnell letters preserved at Kew, and I am indebted to Mr. P. S. Green for searching the correspondence:

Thomas McDonnell (from London) to Mr. Smith³⁷, Kew, 19 September, 1840. About to leave for New Zealand and asking for a case of plants to take.

"My friend Mr. Lambert will tell you of my Gardener and Botanist as a young man of good *practical* knowledge, and was known to our lamented friend Allan Cunningham³⁸; on his judgement faith may be placed, he has already sent a few valuable New Zealand plants to the Duke of Bedford.³⁹

McDonnell (from London) to Mr. Smith, Kew, 31 October, 1840. About to sail for New Zealand.

"The Boxes of plants and seeds have safely arrived of which I have apprised Mr. Aiton⁴⁰, and I have suggested an arrangement by which Mr. Edgerley's services might be made available to enrich your Gardens at Kew. If through the instrumentality of Mr. Aiton Edgerley could have the appointment of Botanical collector with a small salary, of say £100 a year, his services would be exclusively devoted to the employment adverted to.

I know Edgerley's worth; as a *practical* botanist he is invaluable and I have no hesitation in saying that his labours would far surpass those who pretend to greater knowledge in that beautiful study."

McDonnell (from Hokianga) to Mr. W. T. Aiton, Kew, 16 November, 1841.

"I have much pleasure in returning your two boxes filled with New Zealand produce, the nature of which I leave Mr. Edgerley my late Botanist & Gardener to explain and I hope they will meet your approbation . . .

34. There is some confusion here as Mt. Camel is 20 miles (32 km) north of Kaitaia and Maunga Taniwha is about 16 miles (25.7 km) south-east of Kaitaia. There is no specimen of *Gleichenia flabellata*, collected by Edgerley, in the Herbarium at Kew.

35. Bagnall, A. G. & G. C. Petersen, *ibid.* p. 75.

36. The Lord Mountnorrry mentioned is probably George Annesley F.R.S., Viscount Valencia, afterwards 2nd Earl of Mountnorris (1770-1844). He was a friend of Sir Joseph Banks and Mr. A. B. Lambert. One of his seats, Arley Hall, then in Staffordshire, was the English address of John Edgerley.

37. John Smith (1798-1888) began employment as a gardener at the Royal Gardens, Kew, in 1822, and was Curator from 1841 to 1864.

38. See, however, Cunningham's letter to Colenso, 11 April 1839, wherein he disclaimed knowledge of Edgerley.

39. John Russell, 6th Duke of Bedford (1766-1839) had large collections of plants in cultivation at Woburn. He was a patron of botany and a friend of Sir William Hooker.

40. William Townsend Aiton (1766-1849) succeeded his father as Gardener at Kew in 1793, and retired in 1841.

Mr. Edgerley returns to England on the ship *Sir John Falstaff*—he will wait upon you, you will find him a good plain common senced young man, he is allowed to be a good practical botanist—the late Allan Cunningham had a high opinion of his abilities in this way, and Mr. Lambert knows his worth, he is prudent, persevering and faithful, wedded to his profession and would be invaluable to any Nobleman or Gentleman who wished to enrich themselves with the fruits of his labours—I did myself the pleasure of writing to you about him previously to my leaving England respecting his being employed to collect for the Royal Gardens at Kew—I have only to repeat* that he would be found invaluable and would amply compensate in his labours for any salary that might be paid him.”

[Added in another hand] *“quite true he was a good man J. Sm.”

Mrs. H. S. Miller has kindly drawn my attention to a letter at Kew, from Mr. Lambert to Sir William Hooker, dated 17 August, 1840, part of which read:—

“I have no doubt but the New Zealand trees was sent by Egerly who sent me those beautiful Conifera last year.”

She has commented that Lambert was an old man when he received Edgerley's specimens and his herbarium was in a state of confusion. Lambert died on 10 January, 1842, and his plant collections, which had been bequeathed to the National Herbarium at the British Museum, were sold at auction in June.⁴¹ The plants sent to Lambert by Edgerley between 1835 and 1842 were dispersed, some finally reaching herbaria at Cambridge, Kew, Leiden and Oxford.⁴²

Shortly after Lambert's death, Edgerley returned to England and, again, I am indebted to the Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, for permission to reproduce these letters:—

Cows, Isle of Wight.
April 11th, 1842.

Mr. John Smith,
Kew Gardens.

Sir,

In answer to your Letter of this morning to Capt Gordon of The Ship, *Sir John Falstaff* concerning the plants on board for the Royal Gardens, I beg leave to say that nothing respecting the Ship's destination has as yet been known. When it is I shall not fail to forward them by the first and best conveyance as no one can be more anxious concerning their safety than Myself after the trouble I have had in collecting and bringing them so many Thousand Miles. It is my intention to see them safe to their destination. I consider it would be running a great risk to forward them from this place, but if you wish it please to write me by return of Post, and your request shall be complied with. We are expecting Capt Gordon down this afternoon from London with his orders.

I am happy to say that most of the plants are looking well.

I am Sir,
Your obt servt,
JOHN EDGERLEY

41. Hooker, W. J. *Lond. J. Bot.* 1: 394, 1842; Renkema, H. W. & J. Ardagh *Jl Linn. Soc. Bot.* 48: 439-466, 1930.

42. Lanjouw, J. & F. A. Stafleu *Index herbariorum* Part II (2), E-H. p.177, 1957. (*Regnum vegetabile* 9).

Arley Hall,
April 27, 1842.

Sir Willm Hooker

Sir,

I did not receive your letter till late this morning, on account of my having left London. I am remaining at Arley Hall for the Present, but I purpose returning to London in the course of a week, when I shall not fail to pay you a visit⁴³, in the meantime the specimens are at your service. You can take as many specimens as you please at the price mentioned in your letter and if you could do anything else for me I shall feel very grateful. The fruits I have in spirits I think will be of great service to you which I will open as soon as I arrive in London. I have a few good specimens at Chelsea of Dried plants which you shall have as soon as I arrive in London.

I remain
Sir William
Your obedt servt,
JOHN EDGERLEY

Upper Arley
November 19th 42

Mr. Jno Smith
Royal Gardens
Kew.

Sir,

Having now made up my mind to leave this Country for New Zealand I hasten to inform you so that you might have plenty of time to prepare the Two Boxes of Plants you so kindly offered me. I intend to leave England on the 15th January by the Ship *Mary*—and purpose being in London towards the beginning of January—when I shall do myself the pleasure of calling upon you.

I dare say I shall be enabled to get what Fruit Trees I may require from Mr. Knight so that I shall require nothing of you but some good flowering shrubs—such as Rhododendrons—Camelias—Arbutus or Strawberry Tree—Lauristine—Portugal Laurel—Common Laurel—Azalias—a Plant or Two of Lilac—Wisteria sinensis—Tree Paeonia—with a few plants of Fuchsias—Corymbiflora if you can spare it—Ribes sanguinea—Magnolia Grandiflora—etc—Deutzia scabra—Box for Hedging—with a few good Roses, white moss if you can spare it—Acuba japonica—Cedar of Lebanon—Jasminum—or any others you may think proper to give me. Boxes equal in strength and size to those I brought home would do well. It would be advisable not to close the Boxes until the last thing and if you had a few Acorns, Chestnuts, Hawthorn Berries or any other seeds that you thought would germinate, to sow them in the Boxes. I should also be very glad of a small collection of good flower seeds—with *Fir Cones*.

I am Sir
Your very obet Servt
JOHN EDGERLEY

43. Sir William Hooker (1785-1865) was appointed first Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens and moved to Kew in 1841.

25 Collet Place
Commercial Road
Saturday Morn.

Mr. Jno Smith,

Sir,

Having just arrived in London, I find that the Ship will not be ready for Sea for the next three weeks. Consequently there will be no hurry in closing the Boxes of Plants—but in the course of next week I hope to do myself the pleasure of calling to see you and make arrangements for sending them on Board. I hope you will have the list of Plants ready that are in greatest demand, with the native names as I am better acquainted with the New Zealand names.

Please to make my services to Sir Willm Hooker

I remain Sir
Yours Truly
JOHN EDGERLEY

There is a note in another hand on this letter:—

Sir W. J. Hooker

Not having any references to the native names of the New Zealand plants I must therefore leave Sir William Hooker to give a list of some of the more remarkable plants that are not yet in the Gardens, such as the Thuya, *Metrosideros tomentosa*, *Alseuosmia*, *Maire*, *Freycinetia*, etc.

J. SMITH

The 6 box lids are now being painted and will be ready tomorrow morning.

25 Collet Place

J. Smith Esq

Dear Sir,

I duly received your two cases of plants in good order with the other Parcels from Sir Willm Hooker. We leave the Docks on Thursday next and I should feel obliged if you would favour me with the list of the plants in the Boxes as soon as possible.

Which will oblige
Dear Sir
Your obt servt
JOHN EDGERLEY

25 Collet Place
Commercial Road

Sir Willm Hooker

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter with the parcel enclosed as also the Box of Paper, and plants, I cannot but express my sincere thanks for the favour you have conferred upon me and it shall be my study to fulfil to the utmost of my powers the promises which I have made and shall with pleasure adhere as closely as possible to your instructions which I think will be of great service to me, we shall leave the London Docks on about Thursday next, I believe we Land at the Cape of Good Hope if I can be of any service to you there I shall be most happy.

I have the honour to be
Sir William
Your oblged Humble Servt
JOHN EDGERLEY

Before he left England, John Edgerley married Sarah Newnham of Upper Arley.⁴⁴ They took passage on the *Tyne* to Hobart Town⁴⁵, where the ship stayed to replenish. Edgerley, being afraid of missing the season, paid a fresh passage on a schooner to Auckland⁴⁶, where his arrival was recorded⁴⁷ as follows:

"The schooner *Sisters* left Hobart Town on Tuesday evening, the 18th July with a full general cargo. Among the passengers were Mr. and Mrs. Edgerley . . . Mr. Edgerley has brought out from England a large assortment of Plants, some of which he refused great prices for in Hobart Town. Mr. Edgerley formerly resided in New Zealand and before imported a considerable number of useful trees into the country; he also took a collection of New Zealand plants to England; as a Botanist he will be a useful settler to us."

Edgerley bought 6 acres 2 roods (2.5 ha) at Newmarket in 1843 for £26/10/- and a further 5 acres (2 ha) in 1848 for £15/15/-.⁴⁸ He served as a judge at the first Agricultural and Horticultural Show⁴⁹, held on 18 December, 1843, at Mr. Hart's Exchange Hotel, Auckland (floral, horticultural and farm produce), and at the Government Domain (cattle, horses and sheep). He was befriended by Sir George Grey, Dr. Purchas, Mr. Geo Graham, and other keen gardeners of the 1840s⁵⁰ and, from 1846, he advertised fruit trees for sale, usually in May or June each year.⁵¹

Dr. John Johnson, Colonial Surgeon, described a nursery at Newmarket in 1846⁵² and, probably, this was the Edgerley nursery:—

"A great and pleasing change had taken place in the features of the country on either side of the road leading to the Manakou, during an absence of two years from the colony . . . A nursery garden prettily situated at the base of the lava spurs jutting out from Mount Eden was another improvement; it was filled with every variety of fruit tree in a thriving condition, and which, from being raised in the country, are more suited to the climate than those brought from Australia or Van Diemen's Land . . ."

John Edgerley died suddenly on 9 June, 1849, at the age of 35 years⁵³, leaving his widow with a young family. The fruit trees were sold about 1852 and the land used for cows. Mrs. Sarah Edgerley died on 5 June, 1895, aged 83 years.⁵⁴ Edgerley Avenue, Epsom, marks the site of the property.

44. Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Justice Department, Auckland; *Auckland Weekly News* 15 June 1895.

45. *Southern Cross* 12 August 1843; personal communication from Mr. J. H. Edgerley, Warkworth, March 1967.

46. Personal communication from Mr. J. H. Edgerley.

47. *Southern Cross* 12 August 1843.

48. *Auckland Historical Society Journal* 2: 25, 1963; *New Zealand Journal* 8: 223c, 1848.

49. *Southern Cross* 23 December 1843.

50. Personal communication from Mr. J. H. Edgerley.

51. e.g. *New Zealander* 30 May 1846.

52. *New Zealander* 22 September 1849.

53. Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Justice Department, Auckland.

54. *Auckland Weekly News* 15 June 1895.

The live plants that Edgerley sent to England have long been forgotten. Most of the dried specimens that he prepared between 1835 and 1842 were dispersed at the auction of Lambert's herbarium. The conifers were described by Lambert in his famous work on *Pinus*, and the plants that reached Kew were used by Sir William Hooker and Dr. (later Sir) Joseph Hooker.

Edgerley's work added little to the flora of New Zealand, however, as many of the plants of Hokianga had been discovered elsewhere by earlier collectors, particularly Banks and Solander, the Forsters, Dumont d'Urville and Lesson, the Cunninghams, and Colenso. Edgerley is commemorated in the scientific names of two uncommon plants, *Pomaderris pruniifolia* Fenzl var. *edgerleyi* (Hook.f.) L. B. Moore and *Pseudopanax edgerleyi* (Hook.f.) C. Koch.

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